MOTION:

That the Health Information Administration (HIA) baccalaureate degree in the School of Allied Health Professions be eliminated.

RATIONALE:

The faculty of the School of Allied Health Professions wish to merge the HIA degree with the degree in Health Care Administration and eliminate a separate HIA degree.

Professor Ronald Weber, Chairperson
Academic Program & Curriculum Committee

and

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Proposal to Merge
Undergraduate Degree in
Health Information Administration
With the Undergraduate Degree in
Health Care Administration

Introduction

The faculty of the Health Care Administration and Informatics Program recommends the merger of the undergraduate degree in Health Information Administration (HIA) with the undergraduate degree in Health Care Administration (HCA). This follows the merger of the faculties of each program into the Health Care Administration and Informatics Program. Although the HIA degree will eventually be eliminated, HIA courses will continue to be offered and serve existing programmatic and departmental curriculum requirements. This proposal will discuss the rationale for the merger, and the necessary approval and notification steps to be taken.

History

The HIA Program was created in 1975 as the Medical Record Administration Program. It was one of several new programs formed with the institution of the School of Allied Health Professions. The Program graduated its first class in 1978 and has subsequently graduated 384 students over a twenty-two year period. In 1988, the Program changed its name to Health Information Administration. The Program consists of four faculty lines and a .5 FTE Program Assistant. The Supply and Expense Budget has averaged approximately $8,400. The Program offers 21 different courses on a regular basis and historically generates approximately 1000 student credit hours (SCH) per semester.

Rationale for Merging the Program.

- **Greater Efficiency Offering One Degree.** In 1999-00, the four HIA and three HCA faculty merged to form the Health Care Administration and Informatics Program. The merger followed four years of joint faculty meetings. The merger made sense because of the small number of faculty in each Program and the close association between the two curriculums. Merging of the two curriculums was the next logical step. Program faculty believe greater efficiency and management can be achieved by offering one rather than two undergraduate degrees.

- **Significant Drop in HIA Program Enrollment.** Since its inception, Program class size has ranged between 15 - 20 students with a combined total of 30-40 students in the junior and senior years of the major. Enrollment dropped dramatically in 1997 when seven students were admitted to the Program; in 1998 six students were admitted, and in 1999 five students. It is anticipated that less than six students will
enter the Program in 2000-2001. New freshmen and pre-professional student numbers are also down. Correspondingly, Program SCH production has dropped from approximately 1000 to 600 SCH per semester.

- **Merging Will Enhance HCA Curriculum.** Currently, the HCA curriculum requires eight HIA courses. With the merger, five additional HIA courses will be added to the HCA curriculum. This action will enhance the HCA curriculum by giving it a health care information systems emphasis along with its existing strengths in business administration and medical science. This combination of content will make the HCA curriculum unique among similar programs across the country, expand career opportunities for graduates and meet the demand for graduates with backgrounds in health information systems.

- **Create Certificate in Health Insurance Reimbursement Policies and Practices.** Several HIA courses form the foundation for developing the skills and knowledge needed for addressing today’s health insurance requirements. Coupled with courses in Clinical Lab Science and Biology, a certificate in health insurance reimbursement policies and practices is being planned.

**Steps for Completing the Merger**

- **Approvals:**
  
  **Semester II, 99-00**
  1. HCA & I
  2. Health Science Department
  3. SAHP Course and Curriculum and Academic Planning Committees
  4. SAHP Faculty
  5. UWM Academic Program Course and Curriculum Committee

  **Semester I, 00-01**
  5. Faculty Senate
  6. Vice Chancellor

- **Announcements of Merger**

  1. Mid-January 2000, statement in the next undergraduate catalog that no new freshmen will be accepted as PHIA after Semester I, 2000-01, and no one admitted to professional major after Semester I, 2002.

  2. Semester II, 2000, meet with current PHIA and HIA students to announce merger, elimination of HIA degree, and to undertake academic planning.


03/04/2000
REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM
(FORM 2)

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FACULTY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS, FOR A REVISION OF THE EXISTING UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION AND THE ELIMINATION OF THE EXISTING UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN HEALTH INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION.

I. Description

1.1 Exact Designation of Proposed Revisions: It is proposed that the undergraduate degree in Health Information Administration (HIA) be merged with the degree in Health Care Administration (HCA). Subsequently the HIA degree will be eliminated.

1.2 Department or Functional Equivalent: Health Science Department

1.3 School, College or Functional Equivalent: School of Allied Health Professions

II. Program Objectives

2.1 Statement of Program Objectives: The merger of the HIA degree with the HCA degree will concentrate and redirect courses from a degree with low enrollment to a degree that has a similar curriculum and a growing enrollment.

2.2 Describe the Course of Study: Currently, the HCA curriculum includes eight HIA courses. It is proposed that five additional HIA courses be added to the HCA curriculum. Other HIA courses will be organized around a proposed certificate in health insurance reimbursement policies and practices. Also, HIA curriculum planning will continue for a master's in healthcare informatics.

2.3 Relationship to Existing UWM Mission and Academic Plan: The proposed change is consistent with UWM's urban mission to address community needs for health professionals with strong health care administration and information system backgrounds. The HCA students will be prepared to matriculate into the proposed master's in healthcare informatics.

III. Effects

3.1 Additional Faculty Required: Current HIA faculty lines will be maintained to support continued course offerings and to plan and maintain a certificate program in health care reimbursement policies and practices.

3.2 Four-Year Faculty Needs: No change is anticipated in faculty needs for undergraduate programming.
3.3 **Library Resources**: Efforts will continue to secure library resources to support continuing coursework.

3.4 **Required Additional Facilities and Equipment**: Efforts will continue, as necessary, to secure additional facilities and equipment to support continuing coursework.

3.5 **Program Costs**: Program costs will continue to support continuing coursework.

**IV. Justification for Proposed Revision**

The merger of the undergraduate degree in Health Information Administration (HIA) with the undergraduate degree in Health Care Administration (HCA) follows the merger of faculty from the two programs as part of the School restructuring. The recommendation to merge degrees is based on several factors. First, program faculty believe greater efficiency will be achieved by offering one rather than two undergraduate degrees. Both degrees have similar content and could be better managed as one degree. Second, the enrollment in the HIA Program has dropped significantly over the last three years. Freshmen admission and transfer numbers indicate enrollment will not be increasing. Third, the addition of HIA courses will strengthen the HCA curriculum. The curriculum's emphasis on health care administration will now also have an emphasis in health care information systems, making it unique among similar programs across the country. The added curricular emphasis in health care information systems will expand the career opportunities for HCA students, but also meet market demand for graduates with backgrounds in information systems. And finally, certain HIA courses might better serve community needs by organizing these courses into a formal certificate program - specifically a certificate addressing health insurance reimbursement policies and practices.

**V. Recommendation for Action (See attached proposal)**

1. The Bachelor of Science degree in Health Information Administration be merged with the Bachelor of Science degree in Health Care Administration. The Health Information Administration degree will be eliminated.

2. New students will not be accepted into the Health Information Administration Program after Semester I, 2000-2001.

03/04/2000